

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 are all the claims pending in the application, as Applicant herein adds new claims 9-12. Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims define patentable subject matter.

Claims 2-4 and 6-8 are objected to for as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Shimada et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,512,899; hereinafter "Shimada").

Applicant's priority date of January 31, 2001 precedes the effective filing date of Shimada (March 7, 2001). Accordingly, Applicant herein submits a verified English translation of JP 2001-022837 to remove Shimada as an applicable reference.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent claims 1 and 5 are patentable over Shimada, and that dependent claims 2-6 and 6-10 are also patentable, at least by virtue of their respective dependency on claims 1 and 5. Further, Applicant submits that new claims 9-12 also define patentable subject matter.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 10/025,555

Attorney Docket No. Q67820

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

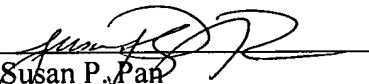
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